

NICOLET NEWSLETTER - NOVEMBER

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From the President's Pen

Hello Nicolet District UMW members,

The days are getting cooler and shorter, and the end of 2013 is coming fast. Nicolet District has already had our District Celebration at the end of September. We had so many things to celebrate:

*49 women attended the Celebration from 15 of the 27 units.

*39 women [completed](#) one of the Reading Program plans.

*15 Units completed the "Special Local Mission Project". (See Jan Stanko Education and Interpretation article for more details.)

*11 Units received the "5 Star Award", giving to the 5 areas of Mission Giving.

*18 Units were recognized for receiving the "Mission Today Award".

*15 units gave a "Special Mission Recognition Pin" to someone who does special mission work. The \$40 (or more) cost of the pin is given to Mission.

* On a sad note, we celebrated the lives of 23 United Methodist Women who had passed away in 2013.

* We Installed our 2014 Nicolet District Officers (the list is included in this newsletter)

* Our speaker for the Celebration was our Conference UMW President, Judy Vasby, who spoke on what it takes to become a Deaconess. Judy spoke on her journey of becoming a deaconess...

* We thank Gillett/Oconto Falls UMW for preparing the lunch for us and Oconto Falls UMC for inviting us to use their facility for the Celebration. (If any unit would like to sponsor an event in the future, please let me, or any other officer know, we welcome all who would like to sponsor an event!!)

WHAT A CELEBRATION IT WAS!! AND I'M SURE YOU WILL AGREE, WE HAD A LOT TO CELEBRATE. THANKS FOR ALL YOU DO FOR UNITED METHODIST WOMEN!!!! AND THANKS BE TO GOD FOR EACH AND EVERYONE OF YOU!! GOD BLESS YOU.

NEW ALERT: KWIK TRIP & HMONG HOUSE OF GOOD NEWS HAVE EXTENDED THEIR CONTRACT TO DECEMBER, 2014. So keep on saving those Milk Moola caps, bag tops, [barcodes](#), and donut ovals!!! Bring to any District or Conference event.

There is a correction to page 14 in the 2013 - 2014 Program Book, "A Calling for this Time". The corrected

page is added in this newsletter.

Now a little about the Wisconsin Conference United Methodist Women's Annual Gathering... About 174 were in attendance from all over Wisconsin on Oct. 18 - 19, 2013 at Asbury UMC in Madison. At the same time, LEGACY Women met at Wellspring UMC in Madison for their "Girls Night Out". This group was for women 7th - 12 grade. ALL young women from Wisconsin were invited to get to know about the missions UMW support, and about this organization of United Methodist Women. They had a special visit from Bishop Hee Soo Jung. About 25 young women attended. 24 were from Metro South District and 1 was from Nicolet District. If you have young women in your church that are interested in mission, please contact Chelsey Ganzer at ganzerchelsey@yahoo.com or Julia Mayeshiba at jmayeshiba@yahoo.com

Amy Genske,
Nicolet District UMW President,
[Email: aegenske48@gmail.com](mailto:aegenske48@gmail.com)
920-853-3759

From the Vice President's Desk

I recently gave the World Thank Offering program from the 2013-2014 program book at our unit meeting. It includes the statement: *"However, as much as the World Thank Offering is about giving, it is equally about receiving. This offering is our individual and collective expression of gratitude for the many blessings we have already received from God."*

There are so many blessings we receive and forget to thank God for. In October, we celebrated our Nicolet District United Methodist Day of Celebration at Oconto Falls. For the previous few weeks I was very busy getting ready for the day and I had a lot of running around to do. The Day of Celebration went well, with no "glitches." We even had a nice day and the rain didn't come until later in the afternoon.

The following day I was ready to go to church and I went to get in my car and found I had a flat tire! It was too late to call someone to pick me up and choir didn't sing, so I stayed home and did my devotions there. I said "Thank you, God" that the flat didn't happen when I really needed to go somewhere.

God is good!

I have been on the Nicolet District United Methodist Women Team for nine years: one year on Nominations, two years as secretary, four years as Nicolet News editor, and the past two as vice-president. When I started each position, I questioned myself whether I could do the job, but each time I learned to do it and grew in doing it. I learned more about United Methodist Women and gained skills and self-confidence.

Through attending the District Team Meetings, Retreats, Days of Celebration, School of Christian Mission and Mission u, and Annual Gatherings, and visiting my sister units, I met so many wonderful women in the District and throughout the state. I gave time and effort, but I gained so much more than that, through the knowledge and friendships I made.

United Methodist Women can do that for us. Working in your own local organization or on a higher level does help us to grow in knowledge and ability as well as to strengthen our faith. I hope everyone will seek a greater involvement in her local organization and on a higher level. We receive as much

and more than we give.

I thank God for United Methodist Women.

Ellen Eastman,

Nicolet District UMW Vice President

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715-526-5030

From the Secretary's Minutes

Nicolet District United Methodist Women

Day of Celebration/Officer Update Minutes September 28, 2013

Oconto Falls United Methodist Church
Oconto Falls, Wisconsin

“I Am Called” was our theme for the day. Our celebration began as we gathered in the Sanctuary and was led in song by Ellen Eastman and Muriel Klein played the organ.

Ellen Eastman welcomed us and introduced Verna Lambrecht, president of the Tabor/Oconto Falls United Methodist Women. Verna welcomed us and explained the merger of the units here and thanked the ladies from Bonduel and Red River for helping out. Lea Ann Pillath the treasurer of their UMW and member of Oconto Falls Methodist Church explained the layout of the church and also welcomed us.

The roll call of local units and others attending was called.

Ellen Eastman then introduced the Nicolet District UMW Officers. Each officer gave a brief statement of responsibilities. We then recited together the United Methodist Women Purpose.

Business Meeting:

Amy Genske began the business meeting with a report. In 2012 the Women’s Division Board voted to become structurally separate from the Board of Global Ministries. The NEW 2013-2016 Handbooks tell us the changes in our local units (now called organizations). I urge all local organizations to purchase a 4 year handbook to be aware of the change which include District and Conference organizations. Only 4 officers are required to be an organization. They are President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Chair of Nominations. On our Nicolet District Team we will strive to fill all of the officer & coordinator positions because we do not feel we can do the job with just 4 officers.

LEGACY Women is the new Young Women group that is being formed on the Wis. Conference UMW level and for women 15-25 years of age. At Mission u there were 15 LEGACY women that attended and this was less than a year of starting the planning for this group!!! Brett Thompson represents LEGACY here today. So if your churches have young women that would like to experience UNW missions at a young person’s view, please contact me and I will get you in contact with Julia Mayeshiba and Chelsey Ganzer.

District Members – If a church does not have a UMW organization but some women of the church have an interest in UMW missions, they can join as a district member. Nicolet has 2 District Members. One, Valerie Fons lives on Washington Island (which has no Methodist Church). On October 18, 19, and 20 Valerie Fons is offering a retreat titled “Sensibilities of Healing” restoration for men and women living with cancer and those who love us. She is asking for help to be able to give prayer shawls to those participating. If any of your churches make prayer shawls and would have extra to send to Valerie, she would be very grateful. Contact me

if that would be a possibility!!

Update on the Kwik Trip Milk Moola caps and UPC bars collection for Hmong House of Good News. The expiration date has changed to December 2014!!! So keep on collecting!!!

Look over all the 2014 Events that have already been set in concrete and put them on your calendar... If your organization would like to host this or any other event, make sure you note that on the evaluation form!!

Thanks and I look forward to an exciting year in 2014.

The attendance report was requested by Amy Genske and Sandra Klein stated there were 49 in attendance representing 15 local organizations.

Amy Genske asked for approval of the 2012 Nicolet Day of Celebration minutes. A motion was made to approve the minutes by Jackie Ackerman and seconded by Jan Stanko. Motion carried.

The Treasurers Report was given by Dottie Unbehaun. We did not make our pledge last year. We gave \$27,300.38 of the \$30,000 pledged. We will leave our pledge the same next year hoping that we will make it this time.

Dottie Unbehaun presented the Five star awards to Angelica, Brillion Faith, Clintonville, Denmark Zion, Green Bay St. Paul's, New London, Parfreyville, Shawano, Sturgeon Bay, Suamico, and Two Rivers Emanuel.

Dottie Unbehaun then led our pledge service and we all brought our pledges forward.

Ruth Wiersma presented the Reading Program awards. Ruth thanked everyone for the number of books read. Twenty six women completed level one and thirteen completed level two.

Jan Stanko reported for Education and Interpretation. Welcome to Nicolet's Day of Celebration. It is a great opportunity to share the accomplishments of our units which will now be called "organizations" under the newly revised United Methodist Women Handbook 2012-2016

Today I want to share some things that have been going on in Nicolet this past year.

We have dropped to 27 active units with 18 qualified for MISSION TODAY UNITS. This is really great because we dropped from 32 units in the 2011 reports with 17 units qualified and 33 units in 2010 with only 13 units qualified. Congratulation to all the 27 active units. Let's all be mindful of other church possibilities that could be introduced to form a UMW.

Nicolet District has had a "Special Local Mission Project" for the past two years. This developed when we felt a VIM trip was becoming a bit stressful for our ladies and too costly, so to expand our mission activities I proposed, to the board, that we offer this opportunity to our units. Each year I have been impressed by the variety of projects the units chose. This year we had 15 units signup for this project. Thank you all for your efforts to do something beneficial for your community.

I have a couple of final comments to all. This is my last year to be your Mission Education and Interpretation Coordinator. Because of the great work you do it has made this a truly inspiring 4 years. This is one UMW position that has a lot of contact with the units, mainly because of our Mission Today unit qualifying forms. It has allowed me to see how each unit works for this award. It does not make any difference how large your unit is or how small. It is just how devoted you are to accomplishing 8 of the 19 criteria. Hopefully over the past 4 years I have been able to share information with you to accomplish more in missions. I will really miss being your E & I. Today is my final training for E & I. Please feel free to join me. I have prepared some extra

handouts. Thank you for making the past 4 years so rewarding. God Bless to all.

Units receiving Mission today awards were: Algoma, Angelica Bonduel, Brillion Faith, Crandon St. Luke's/Argonne, Denmark Zion, Gillet Tabor/Oconto Falls, Green Bay Bethany, Green Bay First, Green Bay St. Paul's, Manitowoc Lakeshore, Northern Door Calvary/Zion, Parfreyville, Red River Salem, Shawano, Sturgeon Bay, Suamico, and Two Rivers Emanuel.

Units completing a special mission project were: Algoma, Bonduel Zion, Brillion Faith, Black Creek Center, Clintonville, Demark Zion, Gillett Tabor/Oconto Falls, Green Bay Bethany, Green Bay First, Green Bay St. Paul's, Manitowoc Lakeshore, Red River Salem, Shawano, Suamico, and Two Rivers Emanuel.

Jackie Ackerman's report on Social Action 2013: Women's rights as they specifically impact immigration education and economic issues.

Violence Against Women Act The United Methodist Church states that ending violence and addressing crimes of violence in our states and the nation depends upon reauthorization of VAWA. Finally Passed.

Immigration Reform – The United Methodist Church assert that immigrants are children of God made in God's image. The General Conference urged all the local congregations to oppose unjust local and state ordinances that seek to deprive undocumented persons of basic social services. The General Conference urged the United States Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform that makes family unity, students being able to get an education at an affordable rate, fair and just treatment of laborers, and a reasonable path towards citizenship a priority.

The US Budget and the "sequester" as it affects the health and welfare of women and Children.

Health Care Reform – we followed the debates in Congress. It is now being debated again – It is important that we all follow that debate and express our feelings to our senators and representatives.

Ruthann Christensen, our Membership Nurture and Outreach coordinator informed us that we have 28 units 2 district members. We added 30 members and lost 76 by death or other reasons leaving us with a total of 767 members.

Carole Biddick, our chair on Nominations informed us that the slate for officers was full except we need one more person on the nominations committee. The slate of officers was read for 2014. There were no nominations from the floor. The motion to accept the list of officers was made and the motion carried.

Jackie Ackerman led the honoring of outgoing officers. Jackie likened their development as that of a young larva turning into a butterfly. They each received a butterfly and a pin in remembrance of their growth and thank you for service. Outgoing officers were Secretary Sandy Klein, Nominations Committee member Shirley Schwartz, E&I coordinator Jan Stanko, and Vice President Ellen Eastman. Joan James was unable to complete her term as Spiritual Growth coordinator and a gift in mission was given in her name as recognition of her job well done.

Ellen Eastman led the installation of new officers. The new officers were read question on service and answered I will to each. After instillation they each received a new pen inscribed with United Methodist Women to use in our work. The officers are President Amy Genske, Vice President Sandra Klein, Treasurer Dottie Unbehaun, Secretary Jan Stanko, Communications Coordinator Nancy Brinkman (not present), Program Resources Ruth Wiersma, Historian Shirley Schwartz, Spiritual Growth Cathy Christensen, Social Action Jackie Ackerman, Membership Nurture and Outreach Ruthann Christensen, E&I Becky Joppich, Nominations Chair Carole Biddick, and Nominations Committee: Verna Lambrecht, Ceil Schneider, and Betsy Johnson.

Ellen Eastman directed us to our respective rooms for officer training. Those not going to officer training remained in the Sanctuary for a small group session on the Social Action Issues led by Jackie Ackerman.

After officer training we returned to the sanctuary for the Love Feast Service led by Cathy Christensen and Jackie Ackerman. Lunch was served in fellowship hall and we sat at the number table indicated on our folder. We enjoyed our lunch and conversation with others we met that day.

After lunch we again gathered in the sanctuary singing songs.

Carol Lahey, our North Central Jurisdiction representative spoke to us about the Assembly that will be held next April. The conference is setting up a package with registration, transportation, and hotel reservations. The earlier we register the more money you will save. Every one that ever went to Assembly said it was a wonderful experience.

United Methodist Women. Judy spoke to us about The Deaconess Program. Judy emphasized that you have to show why you want to be a Deaconess and prove you have the right attitude and calling for the job.

Judy told us about the classes she had to take and the projects she had to fulfill to prove her worthy.

The memorial service "Roses and Remembrance" was led by Cathy Christensen. We remembered each member that passed in the last year with a rose given to her respective unit. Members Ruth Hettiger, Nancy Mielke, Darcie Budd, Arlene Hughes, Mary Dorchester, Evelyn Eyerman, Gerry Hamlin, Betsy Hendrickson, Joyce Klunk, Helen Wright, Gladys DeLess, Betty Reinheimer, Eloise Sieloff, Bernice Staponkus, Marge Schueler, Ann Burrowes, Lucille Miller, Audrey Koukari, Gwen Wilson, JoAnn Hannah, Nina Kurtz Arline Rohde, and Frieda Shubring.

Ellen Eastman ended our day and sent us forth after thanking the women of Gillet Tabor/Oconto Falls, Bonduel, and Salem Red River for making us welcome today. Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra Klein
Nicolet District UMW Secretary
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920-553-3460

Notes From the Editor and From the Treasurer's Checkbook

While I was getting all the articles submitted from each officer, I knew something was wrong. I didn't have any treasure's report, so I emailed Dottie. Dottie's husband, Gaylord, replied that Dottie was in the hospital. Dottie has had surgery, and was expecting to be home before Thanksgiving. Gaylord reported that she is making good progress. But we need to keep Dottie and Gaylord in our thoughts and prayers.

Nancy Brinkman
Newsletter Editor,
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Dottie Unbehaun,
Nicolet District UMW Treasurer
Email: gaydot@frontier.com
Phone: 920-756-2237

Nominations News

We are happy to say that Professor Moriarty's prediction that Sherlock Holmes would never find enough women to fill all the positions on the Nicolet District Team, was completely incorrect. If you weren't at our Annual Day of Celebration, you don't know what I am writing about and that's too bad. We missed you and hope that you will be able to be with us next fall!

We are happy to announce that Renee Binder from Brillion is joining us on the Nominations Committee, which means that at this moment, all of our positions on the Nicolet District Team are filled.

But starting in January we will again start looking to fill position of ladies who will reach tenure at the end of 2014. So you are not out of luck, we will have positions open up in 2015 and we hope that you will want to join us as we continue our purpose to "develop a creative, supportive fellowship and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church". Please call or write any one of us on your Nominations Committee.

We wish each one of you a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed, Healthy and Happy New Year.

Carole Biddick,
Nominations Committee
Email: cdbiddick@gmail.com

Program Resources

It was great selling so many books and materials at the annual Nicolet Day of Celebration at the Oconto Falls United Methodist Church. We were provided a great space, and I had much less to carry home than I toted in. Thank you for your purchases and for your on-going support of the United Methodist Women's Reading Program.

Since then we have met as a district team and worked on setting dates for 2014. Our next Nicolet District event will be the Nicolet/Winnebago Retreat on March 29, 2014, at the Suamico United Methodist Church. I think many district people purchased handbooks, planning books, reading books, etc. at our district gathering and at other United Methodist Women events they may have attended this summer and fall. I trust that your groups/individuals are working on reading their 2013/2014 reading program books. Please advise me if there are any books or items that you would like me to order and take to the spring retreat.

Ruth Wiersma
Program Resources Coordinator,
Email: jwiersma@new.rr.com
920-468-5562

Membership Nurture and Outreach

Last spring I was asked if I would like to be a member or the Nicolet District United Methodist Women. Well the fact that I am writing this note to you all means I must have said yes. This is my first year to be on the district team in many years and I am finding I have a lot to learn.

I am Ruthann Christensen. We have a rural home between Shawano and Wausau. I go to the Mattoon United Methodist Church where my husband is the minister. I retired a number of years ago as a Registered Nurse

having worked in many different areas of health care. In retirement I have found many worthwhile things to be involved in. I can now be active in the United Methodist Women and am secretary of the Mattoon Unit. I am also the secretary of the Daughters of the Nile which is a fraternal organization that supports hospitals that give free orthopedic care to children. I have taken up basket weaving and just became treasurer of the group that meets in Shawano.

We have four adult children who are all married, eight grand children, and seven great grandchildren. We have lived in twelve different cities in the sixty years we have been married. Each of these churches have had different types of United Methodist Women and sad to say I wasn't always able to participate as I might like to due to my nursing profession and the hours the new nurse works which was mostly nights or in the late afternoon. Well now you know more about me than you probably wanted to know.

I am looking forward to getting to know each of you and to know about your unit. This brings me to the real reason for writing. In a week or so the person who is listed as Membership Nurturing and Outreach or the president of your unit should be getting an e-mail or a snail mail from me with a form that needs to be filled out and returned by the end of December. You may be asking yourself why the District needs to know how many members we have. One reason is that is how they figure how much representation we are allowed on the Jurisdiction Level. You need to remember when counting your membership that your minister is counted as a member but he can only be counted as one if he is serving a two or more point charge. You will have to check with the churches on the charge to see who gets to count him. Also the spouse is not counted as a member unless they want to be a member.

This is all the thoughts I have for now. Please get the reports to me as soon as possible as I have a deadline and I must have all churches that have a United Methodist Women or circle counted. I am looking forward to meeting you and getting to know the church women of the Nicolet district.

In faith and friendship
Ruthann Christensen,
W12707 Cty Rd G, Leopold, WI 54948,
Phone 715-787-3762
e-mail: baskets4U2@frontiernet.net

Social Action Nicolet District

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

--- Margaret Mead

[John Wesley](#) often preached about works of piety and mercy as inseparable. Charity is a gift, but social action helps change systems that keep people oppressed and dispossessed. As United Methodist Women, we believe that these are inseparable.

How Wisconsin Badger Care Cuts Effect Women & Children

United Methodist Women have always been concerned with the quality of life of women and children, especially those at the bottom of our social ladder – single mom's, unemployed women with children, minority women with or without children, senior citizens, the disabled and mentally challenged. Wisconsin has often led the way in aiding those women in desperate need of help, but during the last 2 budgets including this current one aide to needy women and children has taken a back seat to other issues.

Workers in Wisconsin are still coping with a relatively weak labor market which is especially challenging for low-wage female workers who are struggling with the declining value of the minimum wage, reductions in employer benefits like health care, and growing inequality. Those challenges have been doubled in Wisconsin by recent budget decisions.

Let us consider some of these major effects include the following policy choices relating to health insurance, child care, taxes and unemployment insurance:

Making health insurance and care much more expensive for many parents now in Badger Care -

The Wisconsin 2013-15 budget bill cuts in half the income eligibility ceiling for adults participating in Badger Care – reducing that cap from 200% of the federal poverty level to 100%. That change is expected to cause nearly 90,000 low-income parents and about 5,000 childless adults to lose their Badger Care coverage, beginning in 2014 and about 80% of these are expected to be women.

Some argue that even though this sharp reduction in the eligibility of parents helps the state pay for an expansion of coverage for childless adults below the federal poverty level, some argue that the state could have covered even more childless adults and saved state taxpayers nearly \$150 million in the 2013-15 biennium by accepting federal health care reform funding and covering adults up to 133% of the poverty level.

How does this budget affect a hypothetical low-income family? Consider a single mother with two children who works full-time for a fast-food chain as a shift manger, making \$11 per hour. (There are currently about 3,500 Wisconsin parents who work for large fast food chains and are participating in Badger Care.) This mother, Sue Smith, is now on Badger Care, as are her two children. Because her income is below 133% of the federal poverty level, she currently pays no premiums and only very modest co-pays for her health care. As a result of the changes in the budget bill, Sue will lose her Badger Care coverage in January 2014 (though her children will remain covered), and she will have to buy insurance through the new Marketplace that will begin next year but as we all know, currently is having mega problems. She will have a relatively modest premium, about \$440 per year, but will have significant co-pays and deductibles, which could be as much as \$2,250 per year.

Changes the state made to Badger Care in 2012 have illustrated that even when the state initiated smaller increases in cost-sharing for families with slightly higher incomes, a substantial percentage found the coverage unaffordable. In July 2012, the state began for the first time to require premiums (but no deductibles or increases in co-pays) for parents in Badger Care with income between 133% and 150% of the poverty level.

The preliminary DHS [Department of Health and Human Services] study of the effects of these expanding premiums show a devastating effect for low-income adults between 133% and 150% of FPL [Federal Poverty Level]. Among the 18,544 parents and caretakers on Badger Care in July 2012 who were in that income range, only 31% were still on Badger Care in December. Failure to pay a premium caused 21% of the original 18,544 to lose their coverage within six months; but among those who weren't disqualified for some other reason during the initial six months, 41% lost their coverage for failing to pay a premium.

Charging premiums for parents in Transitional Medicaid

The state is seeking a federal waiver that would not only restrict eligibility for Badger Care, but would also change another form of Medicaid, known as Transitional Medical Assistance (TMA). TMA is a category of Medicaid that grew out of welfare reform and extends Medicaid eligibility by 12 months for parents who are lifted above the poverty level by a new job or a raise. If federal officials approve that part of the waiver, which would apply premiums to all parents participating in TMA, it would become much

harder for parents to move into the workforce and climb out of poverty. Among parents who do climb above the poverty level, many wouldn't be able to regularly pay the premiums and would lose their insurance coverage. If they became sick, they might need to quit their jobs or reduce their hours in order to get below the poverty level and get into Badger Care

Additional cuts in child care subsidies – adversely affecting accessibility and affordability of care especially for disadvantaged women and children

The budget cuts an additional \$31 million over the next two years from the Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy program for low-income working families (on top of large cuts over the previous several years). That cut is likely to adversely affect many low-wage workers by causing more child care providers to drop out of the subsidy program and by indirectly increasing co-pays for parents participating in Wisconsin Shares.

The Department of Children and Families has acknowledged that it needs to increase the Wisconsin Shares reimbursement rates for child care providers, the freeze on those rates that began in 2006 will be continued until at least January 2014. Although language in the budget bill could allow reimbursement rates to increase for a small subset of providers at that time, that could be difficult to achieve because the bill siphons off funding for Wisconsin Shares and Wisconsin Works (W-2) and makes unsupported assumptions about declining participation in W-2.

The bill shifts federal block grant funding for low-income families away from child care and W-2 in order to use it for the state Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), thereby supplanting state funding for that credit and using those state dollars to build up the state's General Fund balance. This maneuver uses funding intended for disadvantaged families to pave the way for tax cuts that predominately benefit those making more than \$100,000 per year.

The cuts to Wisconsin Shares hurt low-income families in several ways:

1. Undermining the quality of child care, especially among providers who mostly serve low-income families.
2. Causing many providers to drop out of Wisconsin Shares, thereby making it harder for low-income parents to find affordable, regulated care for their children.
3. Creates a widening gap between the subsidies and the cost of care, which increases the share of costs borne by low-income workers.
4. The possibility of women dropping out of the workforce to care for their children.

Continuing last session's tax increases for low-income households

After the 2011-13 budget increased taxes for many taxpayers – by cutting the Earned Income Tax Credit [EITC] and repealing the annual inflationary adjustments in the Homestead Tax Credit. The estimated \$651 million income tax cut in the 2013-15 budget directs 55% of the tax cut to people making over \$100,000 per year, who comprise just one seventh of tax filers and not applying any of it to the lowest quarter of our population.

The combined effect of the last two biennial budgets is that the EITC is now worth \$121 less for a single mom with two kids who makes \$23,000 per year, and the value of the Homestead credit will be about \$170 less in 2015 than it was worth in 2011 for an elderly person with a Social Security income of about \$15,000 per year (growing each year at an inflation rate of 2.5%).

Tightening eligibility for unemployment insurance benefits for jobless workers

The bill makes a number of changes in the rules relating to unemployment insurance (UI), despite the fact that those proposals weren't endorsed by the state's UI Advisory Council. Those changes include an

increase in the work search requirement and other changes affecting eligibility, such as making it easier for employers to dismiss workers without having to pay them UI benefits. Those changes come on top of the one-week waiting period for eligibility, which was imposed by the previous budget bill.

All of these issues could have an increasingly dramatic effect on the quality of life of women and children at the lowest poverty levels in our state. As United Methodist Women we are charged with monitoring how these issues play out and make our feelings known regarding their effect on the lives of women and children. We should continue to follow these issues in 2014.

Jackie Ackerman
Social Action Coordinator
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Education and Interpretation Mission

FINAL REPORT

I want to share some things that have been going on the past 4 years in Nicolet District.

We have dropped to 27 active units with 18 qualified for MISSION TODAY UNITS this is really great because we dropped from 32 units in the 2011 report with 17 units qualified and 33 units in 2010 with only 13 units that qualified. Four years ago we only had 10 units qualify for Mission Today Units... we have made a lot of progress.

Nicolet District has had a "Special Local Mission Project" for the past 2 years. This developed when we felt a VIM trip, like the one we took to Milwaukee, was becoming a bit stressful for our ladies and too costly, so to expand our mission activities I proposed, to the board, that we offer this opportunity to our units. Each year I have been impressed by the variety of projects the units chose. This year we had 15 units sign up for this project. Thank for their efforts to do something beneficial for their community.

I have a couple of final comments to all. This is my last year to be your Mission Education and Interpretation Coordinator. Because of the great works of the units it has made this a truly inspiring 4 years. This is one UMW position that has a lot of contact with the units, mainly because of our Mission Today Unit qualifying forms, but also to help the Unit E & I's build stronger mission projects in their units. It has allowed me to see how each unit works for this award. It does not make any difference how large a unit is or how small It is just how devoted they are to accomplish 8 of the 19 criteria. Hopefully over the past 4 years I have been able to share information with the Units to accomplish more in missions! I will really miss being your E & I Mission Coordinator.

TODAY is my final report for E & I Thank you for making the past 4 years so rewarding..... Just a last note.....I am not leaving the team.... Just changing positions! "Sorry"

All to the glory of God,
Jan Stanko,
Education and Interpretation
Email: jestanko@charter.net
920-524-2067

URGENT REMINDER... DEADLINE FOR MISSION TODAY UNIT
Reports due December 15th Please send yours in....
I need to have this report finished before I leave E & I

Dates to Remember

Dec. 15 -- Deadline for Mission Today Units

March 29, 2014 -- Nicolet/Winnebago Retreat at Suamico UMC

April 4, 2014 -- Mission Action Day

April 25 - 27, 2014 -- Assembly in Louisville, KY